Creative Value of ICH for Sustainable Development

2012 International Conference on ICH Safeguarding

On 5 October, the 2012 International Conference on ICH Safeguarding opened with a performance by the Ensemble of Cultural Partners, an international ensemble composed of participants in an exchange programme at the National Theater of Korea. Hailing from seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the twelve musicians performed special arrangements of ‘Arirang’ and Johannes Brahms’ ‘Hungarian Dance Number 5’. Both song performances created a meaningful segue into the important topics of the day and more importantly showed how divergent cultures can be linked as a single unit through song and creative art.

In his opening speech at the conference, which was attended by over three hundred participants and prominent international speakers, Dr Samuel Lee (Director, ICHCAP) emphasised that the main purpose of this meeting is to reflect on whether the creative values of ICH exist, and if they do, how they contribute to the sustainable development of human society. This kind of reflection will help us clarify why we should safeguard and promote the ICH in each community.

This theme of diversity leading to unity was echoed as the participants discussed the creative value of ICH for sustainable development. As Chérif Khaznadar (President, Maison des Cultures du Monde) stated in his keynote speech on the progression of the concept of sustainable development in international instruments, a single ICH element is necessarily linked to the greater social and cultural needs of a society and vice versa. And these single elements are sustainable as they are passed from one generation to another.

Through the insights presented, conference attendees were able to walk away with a better understanding of how ICH and sustainable development are linked and of the various ways in which diversity enriches and sustains a society. Based on the information provided through the presentations, academic inquiry on sustainable development will likely develop more in the ICH field.

For further information on the 2012 Conference held in Seoul, please refer to page 12.

Pilyoung Park (ICHCAP)

2012 ICH Expert Networking Symposium

Safeguarding ICH and Community Development: Issues and Tasks

The 2012 ICH Expert Networking Symposium was held on Monday, 8 October 2012, in Andong, Korea. This symposium was co-hosted by the International Mask Arts & Culture Organization (IMACO) and ICHCAP, and sponsored by the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea and the Andong Festival Tourism Foundation. Mr Young Sae Kweon, President of IMACO, gave the welcoming remarks, and Mr Young Geun Park, Director General of the Cultural Heritage Administration, congratulated those present for the symposium.

Under the theme ‘Safeguarding ICH and Community Development: Issues and Tasks’, ICH experts gathered to present and discuss the role of the local government and community in terms of cultural diversity and local development.

Distinguished Professor Dawnhee Yim opened the session by delivering the keynote speech titled ‘International Policy and Local Development’. The subsequent presentations were delivered by Dr Samuel Lee (Director of ICHCAP), Mr Gaura Mancacaadipura (Vice Chairman of International Relations, Indonesian National Kris Secretariat), Prof Amareswar Gallia (Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum), Prof Sangmee Bak (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies), and Prof Byungkyu Kim (Andong National University).

The participants presented topicually relevant information, thus providing everyone in attendance with a greater insight into the role of local government in ICH safeguarding as well as perspectives of cultural sustainability through multinational ICH elements. As a follow-up, detailed discussions on the presented materials took place so that other attendees could have a chance to discuss and present their views.

The symposium closed with a roundtable on ‘Suggestions for Local Development through ICH Safeguarding Activities’.

Sul Ki Lee (ICHCAP)
Sharing Useful ICH Safeguarding Experiences and Broadening Expert Networks
International Workshop for Cultural Heritage Experts in the Asia-Pacific Region

The fourth International Workshop for Cultural Heritage Experts in the Asia-Pacific Region was held from 12 to 17 November 2012 in Seoul, Buyeo, and Jindo in the Republic of Korea. Co-organised by the Training Center for Traditional Culture of Korea National University of Cultural Heritage and ICHCAP, this workshop was designed to provide a platform to promote regional safeguarding activities through an international network. Fourteen ICH experts from the Asia-Pacific region took part in the workshop.

The workshop began with a two-day lecture by ICH experts in Korea. The topics included institutional ICH safeguarding in Korea, ICH documentation and database systems in Korea, ICH and intellectual property rights, and safeguarding traditional culture during social transformation.

The workshop was followed by a two-day field trip that allowed participants to have a comprehensive overview of Korean ICH safeguarding methods through on-site experience. Participants visited the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage, the National Research Institute of Maritime Cultural Heritage, and the Jindo National Gugak Centre. As a part of experience, participants had the chance to watch a Jindo funeral ritual (sitimgut) and a gugak performance. Participants also learned ganggangsulae, a 5000-year-old Korean dance that was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. Participants also visited Seonunsan, a beautiful Buddhist temple, and Unlimsanbang, a studio of Sochi (Heo Ryeon), a famous Oriental-style Korean painter of the nineteenth century.

On the fifth day of the workshop, Dr Seong-Yong Park, Assistant Director of ICHCAP, presented on international cooperation for ICH safeguarding. In the afternoon, the participants presented information on the safeguarding policies and systems of their home country. All fourteen participants presented a country report, which provided everyone in attendance with an opportunity to share and understand the ICH safeguarding situation in countries throughout the region. On the last day of the workshop, participants visited Changdeok Palace and Jongmyo Shrine in Seoul as a part of their field visits.

Through this workshop, the current status of ICH safeguarding activities in the Asia-Pacific region was examined by identifying and assessing the safeguarding methods currently being used. In addition, by exploring ideas, discussing strategies, and exchanging experiences, the participating experts were able to take home valuable information on various safeguarding activities. ICHCAP expects this meeting will go towards continuously building regional and international networks among ICH professionals and administrators in the region.

Min Yung Jung (ICHCAP)

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ICH Issues

In the new millennium, sustainable development has become a hot-button issue in various fields, and the ICH field is no exception. In fact, the very existence of intangible heritage in a society is evidence that heritage contributes to sustainable development for communities. Tradition plays a role in maintaining society in terms of community integration and conflict resolution. People also learn societal norms and the value of harmony through shared cultural heritage. Festivals and traditional skills would not have survived if they weren’t compatible with the sustainable development of those communities. The relationship between ICH and sustainable development must receive greater attention and be researched. In October, ICHCAP held an international conference under the theme ‘Creative Value of ICH for Sustainable Development’. At the conference, more than three hundred individuals gathered to listen to presentations by internationally renowned scholars and experts. Public interest on this topic was quite evident throughout the presentations and discussions.

Korea modernised like many developing countries, following the westernisation model, and as a result, many traditional customs were in danger of disappearing. Thankfully, the people realised early enough the importance and value of ICH in relation to human rights and social justice, so various safeguarding initiatives were put in place. In the process of democratisation and social development, traditional dramas and mask dances promoting social awareness have been popularised by students and young generations. The creative value of ICH for sustainable development should be more seriously recognised and studied.
Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage has always been an important issue for the large majority of countries and their citizens, long before the 2003 Convention was adopted. However, this was not formally recognised internationally, and a cultural heritage protection paradigm that prioritised monumental and prestigious heritage over local and indigenous cultural forms dominated. The experience of countries that are party to the 2003 Convention clearly demonstrates that ICH in all its various and diverse forms is a rich social, economic, and even prestigious heritage over local and indigenous cultures with the emergence of the 'endogenous development' model in Africa and Latin America in the 1970s while the adoption of the Declaration of the World Conference on Cultural Policies in 1982 represented an important milestone in recognising intangible aspects of heritage: for the first time, culture was seen as a broad notion encompassing ways of life, social organisation, and value/belief systems as well as material culture. This was followed by important new thinking in the late 1980s and early to mid-1990s, with the introduction of sustainable development and human development approaches and the publication of the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (1995). Increasingly, the value of local and indigenous cultures and their heritage within the wider society and as a resource for its overall development became better understood. Importantly, each of these approaches also has strong human rights aspects, emphasising human capacities (supported by rights), and social justice and cultural rights (for long the 'Cinderella' of the human rights family) also began to receive belated attention internationally at this time.

The Historical Context of the 2003 Convention
Janet Blake (Senior Lecturer in Law, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran)

“The responsibility for identifying and safeguarding/managing cultural heritage has shifted gradually (albeit only slightly) from a purely state-driven operation to one that allows for greater involvement of local cultural communities and groups.”

The International Policy Context
Greater value was accorded to local and ethnic cultures with the emergence of the ‘endogenous development’ model in Africa and Latin America in the 1970s while the adoption of the Declaration of the World Conference on Cultural Policies in 1982 represented an important milestone in recognising intangible aspects of heritage: for the first time, culture was seen as a broad notion encompassing ways of life, social organisation, and value/belief systems as well as material culture. This was followed by important new thinking in the late 1980s and early to mid-1990s, with the introduction of sustainable development and human development approaches and the publication of the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (1995). Increasingly, the value of local and indigenous cultures and their heritage within the wider society and as a resource for its overall development became better understood. Importantly, each of these approaches also has strong human rights aspects, emphasising human capacities (supported by rights), and social justice and cultural rights (for long the ‘Cinderella’ of the human rights family) also began to receive belated attention internationally at this time.

The Legal Context
A paradigm shift was also occurring within UNESCO’s cultural heritage treaty-making, from protecting material elements to celebrating non-material and even mundane cultural expressions. For example, the Operational Guidelines to the 1972 World Heritage Convention underwent several revisions between 1992 and 2005 that increasingly allowed for associated intangible elements as inscription criteria as well as greater input from local communities in designing and implementing management plans. Also, UNESCO and WIPO had been working since the 1970s to develop a joint approach to protecting traditional cultures and their expressions through intellectual property rules, but from the mid-1980s, UNESCO began to explore a broader ‘cultural’ approach that led to the adoption of the 1989 Recommendation on Traditional Culture and Folklore and the 2003 ICH Convention. Many of these changes in UNESCO’s normative work in cultural heritage have been in response to calls from non-western, developing states who felt their heritage was insufficiently reflected in existing treaty frameworks, especially the World Heritage List, and to move away from the Eurocentric emphasis on monumental and prestigious heritage.

In this process, we can see also that the responsibility for identifying and safeguarding/managing cultural heritage has shifted gradually (albeit only slightly) from a purely state-driven operation to one that allows for greater involvement of local cultural communities and groups. Moreover, the role of the state in identifying heritage, and recognising the importance of trans-national forms of heritage are all part of this wider process to which the 2003 Convention can make an important contribution. Since the States Parties are implementing the Convention within a vast variety of contexts— with different social realities and geographical and environmental factors—their responses to these are varied and may have the potential to offer innovative solutions to contemporary social and cultural challenges.
ICH and Traditional Herbal Medicine

Windows to ICH provides an introduction to examples of intangible cultural heritage practices throughout the Asia-Pacific region in relation to specific themes presented in the issue. This issue takes a look at herbal medicine represented in traditional knowledge. In these examples from India, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, and Palau, you can see the various forms of traditional herbal medicine as well as their influence on each community.

Republic of Korea Traditional Herbal Medicine as an Everlasting Vital Knowledge

Jongwook Jeon (Senior Researcher, Korea Institute of Oriental Medicine)

“Many people have confidence in the pharmaceutical use of herbal medicine because of its effectiveness that has derived from experience accumulated over a thousand years.”

The scale of traditional herbal medicine knowledge in East Asia is enormous. One example that shows us this is the work of Seo Yu-gu (1764–1845), a Confucian scholar of the Joseon dynasty in the nineteenth century. He wrote Imwon-Kyungjeji, an encyclopaedia compiling almost all the contemporary East Asian knowledge. This book was nicknamed Britannica of Joseon because it covered the overall knowledge fields of human life—agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, cooking, brewing, construction, civil engineering, crafts, calligraphy, music, commerce, and medicine. Surprisingly, about half of the entire work is about medicinal knowledge, occupying 1.2 million characters of the total 2.5 million characters. This means half of the traditional knowledge in East Asia is related to the treatment of diseases and maintaining human health.

Indeed, it is accurate to say that herbal medicine knowledge constitutes the core body of traditional East Asian knowledge. Books on herbal medicine flooded out from as early as the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) in China, including Shénnóng Běn Cūn (The Classic of Herbal Crops), a three-volume treatise on herbal treatments. Korea’s oldest book on the subject, Hyangyak-Gugeupbang (Handbook of Prescriptions for Emergencies), appeared in 1245, during the Koryo dynasty (918–1392 CE). Hyangyak-Gugeupbang introduced the local names of 180 herbs and described their effectiveness on certain diseases. About every two hundred years after Hyangyak-Gugeupbang was published, additional well-documented volumes of herbal knowledge—Hyangyak-Jipseongbang (1431), Dongui-Bogam (1613), and Imwon-Kyungjeji (1840)—were published until the end of the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910).

Historically, Chinese medicinal knowledge of herbs constantly expanded and overwhelmingly influenced the region, including Korea. But there is some revealing evidence of a reciprocal development of medicinal knowledge systems in East Asia as a whole, rather than a mere one-sided outflow from China.

A Shilla monk, who was a foreign exchange student to China during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE), healed a patient’s foot disease using an herbal concoction originally created in his mother country. The event is acknowledged and recorded in a Chinese medical book, and later Hyangyak-Gugeupbang listed the herb as the Chinese did. The name of this herb is clematis, and the local name is ‘wheel flower’.

Moreover, the scholars who authored Hyangyak-Jipseongbang in the early Joseon period carefully compared the herbs from Korea with those from China. They were eager to match the efficacy and went directly to ask about certification procedures, taking dozens of herbs from Joseon, including clematis. Japan was also willing to compare the quality and efficacy of their medicinal herbs, so they, too, participated in active conversation with national delegations from Joseon and China during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This relationship is comparable in some ways to today’s World Health Organization’s international activities. Considering all these facts, traditional herbal knowledge of East Asia built a practical and universal sharing system among East Asian kingdoms rather than one isolated in a single country.

East Asian Medicinal Knowledge Acts as a Living Practice.

Oriental clinics and alternative medicine are used today in leveraging medicinal knowledge. Many people have confidence in the pharmaceutical use of herbal medicine because of its effectiveness that has derived from experience accumulated over a thousand years. Moreover traditional knowledge also contributes to the knowledge of modern medicine. Qinghāo (Artemisia annua), detected as an anti-malaria medication, is a good example. A modern, large-scale Chinese project to combat malaria met with failure because they were the general method of boiling to extract artemisinin, the active drug in qīnghāo. They rechecked the ancient texts containing the use of qīnghāo, and found a record indicating that the plant needed to be used as a raw juice due to the low boiling point of artemisinin. This shows that intangible knowledge of herb processing methods is important and relevant in developing new drugs. Recently, a Korean pharmaceutical company developed new natural drug, which contains three herbs including clematis. This medicine shows high efficacy with arthritis, and clematis has proudly stood in an important role since Shilla monks first announced its use a thousand years ago.

The vitality of traditional medicinal knowledge is amazing. As the two examples show, we are on the verge of an intense interaction between traditional medicinal knowledge and modern scientific knowledge to open up new possibilities and methods.
India  Ayurveda—the Divine System of Medicine

Ajay Kumar Sharma (Director, National Institute of Ayurveda)
Amit Kumar Sharma (Scholar, National Institute of Ayurveda)

Introduction
Ayurveda is one of the most ancient systems of medicine in the world. Most literature in Ayurveda is in sutra form. As interest Ayurveda has been increasing, so too has the demand for authentic Ayurveda literature that is suitable for laypeople interested in the study and practice of Ayurvedic medicine.

Ayurveda Medicine: Its Approaches and Principles
All the classical texts of Ayurveda, originally written in Sanskrit, are in the form of an encyclopaedia that deals with all aspects of life, health, disease, and treatment. The approach is philosophic, holistic, and humanistic with two major objectives: 1) to maintain the health of individuals and 2) to cure the diseases of the inflected. Ayurveda is more life and health oriented than disease and treatment oriented, presenting a total life science while holistically visualising the total health of the total human being.

Ayurveda advocates a complete promotive, preventive, and curative system of medicine and appears to have been practiced in ancient times in the form of eight major clinical specialties of medicine—namely, 1. Medicine 2. Surgery 3. Diseases of eye, ear, nose, and throat 4. Paediatrics, obstetrics, and gynaecology 5. Psychiatry 6. Toxicology 7. Nutrition, rejuvenation, and geriatrics 8. Sexology

The Fundamental Principles
Ayurveda is based on the laws of nature and the theory of Macrocosm-Microcosm Continuum, which says that individual human beings are miniature replicas of the universe. Individuals and the universe are both pancha bhautika, which is to say they are made up of five basic physical factors bring to previous column.

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<tr>
<th>S.NO</th>
<th>PANCHAMAHABHUTA</th>
<th>MAIN FUNCTION REPRESENTED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ether/space</td>
<td>To hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Air/motion</td>
<td>To touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fire/radiant energy</td>
<td>To see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Water/cohesive factor</td>
<td>To test</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Earth/mass</td>
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Ayurveda conceives life (ayu) as a four dimensional entity composed of the physical body, senses, psyche, and soul (the conscious element). Thus, a living being is a comprehensive and highly dynamic psycho-physio-spiritual unit that is in constant interplay with the cosmos.

Tridosha and Prakriti
Doshas are the energy forces on which the life rests. The Tridoshas, or three doshas, are Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, and they form the biochemistry of all living beings and represent the basic molecular mechanisms of the body.

Every individual is born with a combination of all three doshas, but one is preponderant at the time of conception. This preponderance remains throughout a person’s life, forming the person’s prakriti or natal constitution—the genetic character of an individual.

Basic Causes of Disease
According to Ayurveda, the basic cause of all diseases is a person’s failure to maintain harmony with the environment. Fundamentally, the Loka Purusha interaction takes place at three levels. 1. Time and its chronological influence. 2. Intellect of humans as the major source of thought information. 3. Objects of the five sense organs as the source of stressful information from the macrocosm to the microcosm.

Unwanted malfunctions, classically termed as Ayoga (Absence), Atiyoga (Excess), and Mithyayoga (False), are considered the primary causes of imbalance and thus of disease.

Prevention, Longevity, and Treatment in Ayurveda
Ayurveda advocates a comprehensive regimen of life as the means to preserve normal health. Called Swasthavritta, this regimen can be described in terms of daily, nocturnal, and seasonal routines.

Rasayana is a measure that produces longevity, develops positive health, improves mental faculties, and provides resistance and immunity against diseases. It is a specialised type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspects of the body—dhatus (body tissues), agni (the metabolic activity), and srotas (micro-channels)—and helps in the prevention of aging.

A holistic therapeutic approach is the backbone of Ayurveda. The three classical Ayurvedic therapeutic streams are divine therapy (often practised with astrology), rational therapy (rationally planned), and psychotherapy. These streams are subdivided. For example, rational therapy is carried out in two parts: Panchakarma therapy, which aims to purify the body to enable the free flow of nutrients, medicaments, and metabolites, and Samshamana therapy, which consists of a rationally planned diet, drug treatment, and lifestyle.

Conclusion
Indian traditions and the divine system of Ayurveda can contribute significantly in managing and preventing various ailments and promoting positive health. This can work on a global scale by adopting holistic, prakriti-based approaches for preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative care with greater emphasis on generating awareness about lifestyle and dietary modifications.
Kyrgyzstan  The use of medical herbs in Kyrgyz traditional medicine

Amantur Japarav (Chair of the Archaeology and Ethnology Department, Academy of Sciences of Kyrgyzstan)

Kyrgyz traditional medical knowledge formed and developed from ancient times based on empirical observation and personal experience. Along with other methods and techniques of preventing specific diseases, importance was placed on herbs. A good level of knowledge about the medicinal properties of plants was required. Healers (tamyrchy or tabyp), by feeling the pulse and making observations in other ways, determined the cause and nature of an illness and prescribed certain medicines, where the stems, leaves, roots, grasses, and shrubs played a considerable part.

Among the most commonly used medicinal plants are the roots of aconite rotundifolia (uu korgoshun). It is used to treat joint diseases, rickets, and other ailments. According to experts, it should be taken cautiously and in small doses. After any treatment, one should stay warm.

The leaves and roots of white aconite have always been an effective agent against colds, coughs, nervous disorders, and diseases of the joints. In the treatment of the latter, Ephedra is also commonly used. The leaves of burdock were known as an effective tool in treating gastro-intestinal diseases, wounds, and severe pertussis.

Wild rue was used to normalise pressure and to treat diseases of the colon and throat. Traditionally, it is also widely used for fumigation. This herb is considered a good anti-influenza antibiotic. On the advice of doctors, one had to sniff wild rue smoke for about ten minutes. This would be a preventative measure on getting sick. Juniper twigs were also widely used for cleaning purposes to help ward off illness. Ala-archa fumigation is periodically held by some families in their homes and corrals to destroy viruses and banish evil spirits so that the people could maintain their health and the integrity of their herbs. These plants are also used for fumigation at various festivals and rituals, and they play important roles as psychotherapeutic agents.

After centuries of empirical observation and botanical knowledge, people have mastered planting different types of vegetation. Traditional healers diverted attention to the timely collection of fruits, leaves, roots, wild grasses, and shrubs. For example, some herbs are usually collected at the stage when they are fully ripe. The roots of medical plants are often harvested in the fall. In addition, it is necessary to know the positive conditions needed while collecting, shredding, and drying herbs. It should be noted that traditional practitioners collected herbs that had positive results in treatment processes.
Palau Ongael (Delalakar), the Mother of Medicine

Dwight G. Alexander (Director, Historical Preservation Office, Palau)

“Traditional medicines were believed to restore health and vitality by breaking the curse, appeasing the gods, or restoring the spirit from a broken taboo.”

Before modern hospitals appeared in Palau, German and Spanish missionaries brought medicines in the form of powder, tablets, and capsules. The local people were amazed to see such medicine and believed the medicine was from western gods. The reason for this belief is rooted in history. Before western contact, people believed that illnesses were a result of curses, displeased gods, or the breaking of taboos. Traditional medicines were believed to restore health and vitality by breaking the curse, appeasing the gods, or restoring the spirit from a broken taboo.

In Palau, there are many traditional herbal medicines used to cure sores, boils, skin rashes, headaches, congestion, stomach aches, and other such illnesses. However, with modern knowledge, the use of traditional medicine is seen as idolatry since medicinal practices are connected with spirits (good or evil) and deities. Therefore, the use became somewhat forbidden when western contact was made and modern medicine and new religious beliefs were introduced.

Modern doctors are starting to study the medicinal value of traditional herbal plants, and they trying to educate and inform the people that the plants are actually medicine on their own without the help from the spiritual realm. They are also trying to encourage people to shift from unhealthy eating habits to healthy diets to avoid diseases associated with unhealthy behaviours. One of the goals is to encourage the local people to use traditional preventive medicines so they can maintain their strength to combat illnesses.

One such herbal medicine is Ongael (Phaleria nitida), commonly known as delalakar, which is translated to mean ‘mother of medicine’. Mr Taitel Saburo, who holds the chief title ibedul er a Barrak of Ngebei, Ngarchelong State, relays his experience and knowledge of the medicine. While he admits that he is not an expert in traditional medicine, he recalls that around 1944, when he went to school during the Japanese occupation (1914–1945), the people with whom he stayed in Ngaraard State were using Ongael. They would boil the leaves (mature leaves) in hot water and drink the tea-like decoction for strength and for treating colds, flus, and high fevers. They also used the leaves to treat wounds and sores by crushing the leaves and using the sap.

When he returned home to Ngarchelong State, he asked his family about the medicine and was told that it was used long before the Japanese came on the island and even before the German Administration of Palau (1899–1914) and the Spanish Administration (1885–1898). He found out that it was also called delalakar because it can be mixed with other medicine to form a different medicinal content used to treat other ailments. For example, when mixed with kirrai (Scaevola taccada) and klschedui (Vitex trifolia) and boiled to make the tea-like drink, it can be used to treat persistent cough and congestion. It has been said that it can also help with hepatitis and helps to strengthen the kidneys and liver.

A very recent book entitled, Palau Primary Health Care Manual, a book on health care combining conventional treatment and traditional uses of plants for health and healing, talks extensively about delalakar as well as other herbal medicines in Palau. The book is forwarded by Dr Stevenson Kuartel, MD, Minister of Health in the Palau national government, and prefaced by Dr Victor M. Yano, MD, former Minister of Health and a private physician in Palau. The information in the book was compiled by doctors and plant experts with data provided by local experts who have learned or experienced the use of the herbal plants. The experts discussed Ongael as being common medicine used by the local people before the introduction of western medicine. Mixing the leaves of Ongael, kirrai, and klschedui and boiling them to make the tea-like brew that can be consumed hot or cold helps stimulate appetite; it is diuretic and a good source of energy. When people drink the brew while working, it helps them sweat and cleanses their system. Afterwards, they feel energised rather than fatigued.

Delalakar is still widely used today, even by the younger generation. It is more valuable now with attention shifting to healthy lifestyles and healthy diets.
The beautiful body-sway of Malaysian traditional dance is often showcased outside the country as an effort by Tourism Malaysia to introduce local arts to the world. Aside from the mainstream traditional dance, Malaysian aborigines are also known for their unique traditional dance art. Unfortunately, these forms are not commonly known nor are they publicised as much as modern dance art.

Representing approximately 0.01 per cent of Malaysian population, there are approximately 180,000 aborigines in Malaysia divided into a number of tribes. Each of these tribes has a traditional aboriginal dance that is relevant to their spiritual beliefs and is often an element in their shamans’ spirit-contacting rituals. This includes the Mahmeri tribe’s Gulang Gang Dance, Berjerom of the Jah-hut tribe, and the Sewang of the Semai and Temiar tribes.

To provide more exposure of traditional dance art to local society and tourists, the Malaysian Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture recently held the Aborigines and Indigenous Arts Festival in the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) in Kepong, Selangor. The festival, which was the first of its kind in Malaysia, aimed to bring these musical and dance arts together in one place as a celebration of their uniqueness and diversity.

The cosy and relaxing environment of the FRIM complemented the cultural arts, allowing the performances to take place in nature with an organic backdrop of lush greenery.

The performers, all dressed in colourful and unique costumes and ornaments made from coconut leaves, welcomed Datuk Ab Ghaffar A Tambi, the Deputy Chief Secretary (Culture) of the Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture, who officiated the festival. Also in attendance at the officiating ceremony was Datuk Norliza Rofli, the Director-General of the National Department for Culture and Arts, who is known for consistently emphasising the importance of culture and arts as legacies that need to be preserved and revered.

Other than aboriginal and indigenous music and dance performances, the festival showcased costume modelling, exhibitions, and demonstrations of topeng moyang (ancestor masks), sumpit (a type of weapon made from bamboo), rattan and bamboo baskets, carving art, traps, tools, accessories, trinkets, clothes, musical instruments, and food.

In addition to acknowledging the artistry achievements of aboriginal tribes, the festival increased visitors’ understanding of aboriginal and indigenous culture and arts. There were dance shows by aboriginal performance arts groups from

"Aside from the mainstream traditional dance, Malaysian aborigines are also known for their unique traditional dance art."

Tourists dancing the Sewang dance with locals © Tan Chew Lian

A man demonstrating the sumpit, a type of bamboo weapon that shoots poison darts © Tan Chew Lian

Girls from the Semai tribe playing chentong, a bamboo musical instrument © Tan Chew Lian
the nine states of the Malaysian peninsula and two ethnic groups from Sabah and Sarawak (Borneo), including artistic groups from the National Department for Culture and Arts.

The aboriginal groups were Orang Asli Seletar and Bakar Baru Perling from Johor and Post Behtau and Semelai groups from Pahang. Other performers came from Borneo, and for the first time travelled by airplane, to attend the festival.

The showcased dances were Sewang Senoi, Mahmeri (mask), Ketam Bangkang from Johor, Ceracik from Pera, Sewang Lanok from Negeri Sembilan, Sek Sek from Kedah, Orang Kitai from Melaka, Temadak from Sabah, Ngoncong from Sarawak, Sewang dance performed by aborigine artist Bahbola, and Sewang Malaysia. An additional highlight to the festivities included singing and musical performances by famous aboriginal and indigenous singers and bamboo musicians. These performances had an interactive element to pique interest as visitors were encouraged to sing and dance with the performers. The communal atmosphere created by the melding of divergent cultures and backgrounds in a unified appreciation for the aboriginal and indigenous choreography and orchestrations was unprecedented.

Adding to the lively aesthetic of the festival were the vending stalls through which artisans and cooks sold handicrafts and food from different aboriginal and indigenous settlements of Malaysia. Of the wares being sold, the buluh perindu (wooer bamboo) captured the most interest as it is said to have been used by aboriginal males in the past to mesmerise girls into loving them.

For honey lovers, the aboriginal and indigenous people brought with them the most pure and rarest royal black honey and made it available for sale to generate income. The festival provided an accessible platform to match suppliers with buyers, as raw and pure honey is highly sought by local urbanites and is always in demand.

Other food that has generally just been obtainable in villages was made available for wider distribution during in the festival. The food was cooked using traditional techniques that have been passed on through generations by ancestors. For example, one dish called lemang buluh is made by using indigenous bamboo cooking methods, where the preparer combines glutinous rice with beef, fish, or tapioca, stuffs the ingredients into a bamboo stalk, and grills over charcoal for three to four hours.

Visitors also had the opportunity to participate in a fish-catching competition at a nearby pond. This competition, however, differed from most others as the participants were required to catch fish using bare hands. The participant who caught the most fish in a given time was declared the winner.

The festival was successful in entertaining and providing information about Malaysian aboriginal and indigenous arts to visitors and tourists.
Inventory—Making Efforts

Intangible Heritage Inventory-Making Efforts in China
Shouyong Pan (Professor of Anthropology and Museology, Minzu University of China)

In China, inventory making is at the core of its legal system on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding today. China’s classification, application, and administration are very different to those in Korea and Japan.

There are four different levels of inventory programmes: state level, provincial level, city level, and county level.

In 2006, the State Council published the first batch of state-level ICH items on a 518-item list that included the Spring Festival, Beijing Opera, Acupuncture (Chinese traditional medicine), the Legend of Madame White Snake, Shaolin Kung Fu, and others. The second batch of 510 items was published in 2008. The third batch, published in 2011, was a 191-item list. This adds up to 1,219 items in total. The inventoried items are classified into ten types—folk literature, traditional music, dancing, opera, arts and crafts, quyi (Chinese folk art forms, including ballad singing, storytelling, comic dialogues, dapper talks, and cross talks), folk customs, acrobatic performances, and traditional medicine. Obviously, this classification system does not match with the UNESCO ICH domains.

In 2006, 2008, and 2011, the thirty-one provincial governments (including four municipalities, five national autonomous regions, and two special administrative regions) each published a provincial-level ICH inventory, which includes 8,566 items. During the same period, most city and county governments also published city-level and county-level ICH inventories, respectively. According to incomplete statistics, the total number of inventoried items at the city and county levels exceeds 18,000. However, only two government-level inventories (state level and provincial level) are stated in the Law on the Protection of ICH in China, which passed in 2011.

An important part of the inventory-making system is the inheritor system in which the State Council announces the names of individuals who have been designated to pass on China’s ICH. To date, the State Council has made three announcements listing the nation’s ICH inheritors, and there are currently 1,488 individuals with this designation. In October 2012, the fourth batch of state-level ICH inheritor nominations was submitted. The list includes 490 nominees from 31 provinces, regions, and municipalities, and the new additions to the inheritor list will be announced soon. This inheritor system also has four different levels, meaning that the state, provincial, city, and county governments have their own lists of ICH inheritors.
As a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, China has been strengthening its efforts to save ICH elements from extinction. Apart from inventory-making and inheritors systems, China established Cultural Ecological Protection Zones to build up a living culture area. This is a new creation related to the idea of an eco-museum. To date, China has already set up twelve Cultural Ecological Protection Zones at the state level.

In 2012, China adjusted the steps and processes of inventory making, based on the results of a one-year survey, a self-evaluation, and a re-examination. Six state-level items have been cancelled; two state-level items need to be rectified with a certain time; and ninety-seven state-level items have been adjusted. Provincial-level items and local-level items are in the process of being adjusted and rectified. The inventories will be updated regularly, but this does not necessarily mean more items will be added.

According to the 2003 Convention, inventory making is a responsibility of Member States:

To ensure identification with a view to safeguarding, each State Party shall draw up, in a manner geared to its own situation, one or more inventories of the ICH present in its territory. These inventories shall be regularly updated (Article 12).

China’s inventory-making model is in line with the Convention and its principles. One could say that China enjoys its own character while developing ICH policy to contribute to peace in the world.

Although China’s national ICH policymaking started in the mid-1990s, the concept and principle of ICH were very new to China as late as 2000. Nowadays, however, even housekeepers in remote villages know the term feiyi (ICH in Chinese) and the benefit of feiyi. During anthropological field work at an ethnic minority village in Guizhou province last summer, the village leader showed the researchers her grand plan to establish an ICH museum in the village. This, however, was not a shock, as it is known that the local community takes an inventory at all levels and it is seen as a cultural resource that will bring benefits sooner or later. The local people do not care much about the social and cultural changes in the world, the issues related to increasing globalisation, or the perceived homogenising effects on culture we are facing on, but they do care about their land, their life, and their traditions. Local governors, such as town leaders and county leaders, see inventory making as a part of their regular work, and they do care about state-level and provincial-level inventories, but they do not worry about local-level inventories.

Most researchers have realised that our rich and varied ICH is in danger of disappearing, not only in China but everywhere. To safeguard this heritage, we must conduct professional ICH surveys, keep accurate records of ICH, and make ICH inventories at different governmental levels throughout the country and the world. We have realised that we do have the same aims: to ensure the survival and vitality of the world’s local, national, and regional living cultural heritage. Heritage does not always mean a good life, but it never means a bad life.
The important linkage between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development has long been a topic in international discourse, but the linkage between them has only recently made a formal appearance in international legal instruments. Some of these include the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of 1989, in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and in the Istanbul Declaration of 2002, adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture.

However, in spite of this discourse and inclusion, international programmes and national policies are not yet able to recognise culture as an essential dimension in development. Furthermore, because culture is not embedded within the Millennium Development Goals, there are serious concerns in international society. These concerns are further amplified within the field of intangible cultural heritage because the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 has but a two scant passing references to the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, with nothing by way of an in-depth explanation on the topic.

Given the international concern about the lack of usable information related to intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, ICHCAP, with sponsorship by the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea and the government of Dangjin City, organised the 2012 International Conference on ICH Safeguarding, which was held in Seoul on 5 October.

At the conference, more than three hundred attendees from around the globe listened to presentations, presentation discussions, keynote speeches, and the plenary discussion. The full texts and transcriptions of the presentations, presentation discussions, keynote speeches, and the plenary discussion will be made available as a downloadable PDF file through the ICHCAP website in 2013.

He indicated that culture is not being highly prioritised developing countries, which are facing a number of economic difficulties. However, he also emphasised that the very idea of development can be interpreted to include overcoming needs through the progressive realisation of potentially existing resources. He also mentioned the need to establish appropriate parameters and limits to maintain a balance between safeguarding and use.

SESSION 3: Chaired by Tim Curtis (Chief, Culture Unit, UNESCO Office in Bangkok)

Dawnhee Yim (Distinguished Professor, Dongguk University) initiated her presentation by giving a brief historical overview of implementing an ICH safeguarding system in Korea, dating back to the 1960s, a period marked by rapid industrialisation and westernisation. She also shared case studies on institutional ICH safeguarding based on Korean policy, which has up to now fossilised ICH and has not allowed designated ICH the possibility to change.

Amareswar Galla (Executive Director, International Institute for the Inclusive Museum) provided a strategic vision and extensive practical lessons for sustainable ICH safeguarding. Using case studies from Cambodia and Viet Nam, he showed how ecomuseology can be a key tool for sustaining heritage development and how ICH can be a potential resource for tourism, bringing in opportunities for economic development.

Gaura Mancacaratipudura (Vice Chairman of International Relations, Indonesian National Kris Secretariat) emphasised the importance of education in ICH safeguarding, by providing information about different forms of education—that is, formal, informal, and non-formal education. He used Indonesian case studies that demonstrate how these kinds of education forms can be used in transmitting ICH and can be a part of an implementing strategy that can become a common resource for humanity and thus contribute to sustainable development.

The presentations for each session were followed by response papers as well as discussions.

The full texts and transcriptions of the presentations, presentation discussions, keynote speeches, and the plenary discussion will be made available as a downloadable PDF file through the ICHCAP website in 2013.

Michael Peterson (ICHCAP)
Tangible Programs to Safeguard Philippine Intangible Heritage

Maricris Jan Tobias (National Commission for Culture and Arts, Philippines)

In 1992, the Philippines passed Republic Act 7355, which established the Manlilikha ng Bayan programme to recognise national living treasures in the field of traditional and folk arts.

The challenge faced by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) in implementing this law is that intangible cultural heritage “is always undergoing transformation,” and as a result, it is “in danger of disappearing if not nurtured or has become incompatible” with current social demands. In addition, much Philippine intangible heritage remains undocumented. Philippine ethnic groups are numerous and dispersed across the country, residing in hard-to-access areas. The practitioners of traditional and folk arts are aging rapidly, but there is diminished interest among the young to learn these skills and take up these traditions. Other challenges include the absence of a formal system to transmit these skills, inadequate marketing and entrepreneurial support or employment opportunities, and the diminution in the importance of social activities that once nurtured occasions for practicing cultural traditions.

Thus, the NCCA, as the national policymaking and grant-giving body for culture and arts, has to identify, develop, and implement strategies that would not only address the issue of cultural transmission, but also infuse value into culture, so that the practice of traditional culture and arts and the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage become meaningful and compatible with current social practices. In addition to the Manlilikha ng Bayan, the NCCA has two flagship programmes for preserving intangible heritage: a national cultural mapping plan and Schools for Living Traditions, which were established in key ethno-linguistic regions. Both programmes had to deal with administrative challenges in implementing a wide scope of activities across a broad territory with very limited budget.

In 2001, however, an opportunity came to implement an intensive and detailed programme for safeguarding a specific expression of Philippine intangible cultural heritage in a particular territory. That was the year the hudhud narrative chants, traditionally performed by the Ifugao community, was proclaimed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. An integral part of the community that built the Philippine rice terraces, the hudhud chants are “practised during rice harvest and weeding time, to honour the dead, and at funeral wakes. Thought to have originated before the seventh century,” a complete recitation of the more than two hundred chants of the hudhud may last several days.

The UNESCO proclamation required the Philippines to take measures to safeguard the hudhud through a programme for its inventory, promotion, study, management, and transmission. The proclamation came with a programme-implementation grant, and the NCCA led the coordination of what became the Three-Year Action Plan for Safeguarding and Transmission of the Hudhud Chants of the Ifugao (Hudhud Safeguarding Program). The programme was managed by the NCCA Intangible Project Secretariat and the Ifugao Intangible Heritage Executive Committee (IIHEC).

Based on previous experience, the NCCA knew that the most effective strategies would be those that have strong support from the local communities and local institutions. Thus, while the Hudhud Safeguarding Program initially had only enough funding for three years, through careful management and by tapping local and private support, the NCCA was able to conduct programmes from May 2003 to April 2008. As a result, the hudhud oral tradition has undergone a national and local cultural revival, with funding initiatives now shouldered by the local government, local communities, and private donors. While the NCCA had been at the helm of designing a national strategy for safeguarding this oral tradition, it was the local government officials, school principals and teachers, hudhud practitioners, and other members of the community themselves who worked to ensure the successful implementation of the programmes.

The Hudhud Safeguarding Program has succeeded in (a) reinvigorating the annual hudhud festival held every November; (b) institutionalising a hudhud chanted contest; (c) institutionalising a recognition program for outstanding lead chanters whose work has encouraged increased participation; (d) publishing two children’s books based on stories from the hudhud narrative, a multimedia packet for all municipal public libraries and teaching guides, and a directory of hudhud practitioners; and (e) establishing Hudhud Schools for Living Traditions. The hudhud has also been integrated in the formal education curriculum in local primary schools. In addition, the hudhud has been declared a National Cultural Treasure.

After the expiration of the Hudhud Safeguarding Program, the Province of Ifugao organised the Ifugao Provincial Council for Cultural Heritage. This has allowed NCCA to officially withdraw from the program in order for the local community to take the lead in implementation and ensure the continuity of the projects already in place. The strategies identified by the NCCA and its partners for the Hudhud Safeguarding Program have served as a template to revive and revitalise other intangible cultural properties.

Based on previous experience, the NCCA knew that the most effective strategies would be those that have strong support from the local communities and local institutions."
Looking into Concepts of Elements and their Similarity
Intergovernmental Working Group on the 'Right' Scale or Scope of an Element

The Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the 'Right' Scale or Scope of an Element was held from 22 to 23 October 2012 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. The decision to hold the working group meeting was decided during the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (November 2011, Bali, Indonesia) with the aims of considering similarities and inclusivity among nomination files and developing possible solutions on the issue. In this regard, the Secretariat organised the working group meeting with the financial support of the Japanese government. At the meeting, approximately 220 participants from States Parties, non-States Parties, non-governmental organisations, and category 2 centres in the ICH field attended the meeting and entered discussions.

During the two-day meeting, the participants reviewed the issue of what is considered the right scale or scope of an element and suggested concepts related to the issue as well as possible procedures to deal with it. To achieve the goals, the working group first looked into the issues through four papers prepared by experts on the following themes: 1) Concepts of the 'element' in the drafting of the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives, by Riek Smeets; 2) Taking stock of the elements inscribed on the Lists: actual trends, categories, and examples, by Toshiyuki Kono; 3) Possible ways to deal with 'similar elements': the extension of an inscribed element and the nomination of 'serial elements', by Ahmed Skount; and 4) 'Right' for what context—Elements of intangible cultural heritage in inventorying, listing, safeguarding, and raising awareness, by Maria Cecilia Londres Fonseca.

These papers are available on the UNESCO website, http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00497

On the basis of the four themes, the participants had a heated discussion, and the issues on using the term 'element' and the concepts of 'similarity' and 'extension' were settled. Above all, the working group shared the view on using 'element' as a term indicating 'specific manifestations of intangible cultural heritage'. Although the term is being used mainly in documents related to the 2003 Convention, including the Operational Directives to the Convention, participants brought forward an opinion that for some countries, such as Arab and Asian countries, it is hard to capture various aspects of ICH by simply translating the term into their languages. Reflecting this opinion, the working group recommended that each country use a term most properly conveys the meaning of 'element' in the context of the Convention by considering country's unique culture and history.

The participants also discussed the issue of elements' similarity, which has often been brought up when the Committee deals with nomination files. The concept of extension was also discussed as a solution to the issue. First, the participants raised a question on the expression 'similar'. They indicated that ICH elements cannot be 'similar' or 'same' because each element is unique and specific to each culture. In this sense, the participants agreed that 'ICH shared by communities' is more appropriate than 'similar'. Those elements could be 'extended' to the already inscribed elements. The prevailing opinion is that extension amongst elements in different State Parties (transnational extension) should be possible as it is in a single country (national extension). In this context, the meeting group decided to recommend that the Committee amend paragraph 14 in the Operation Directives, which is the relevant section about multinational files.

The discussions and results of the meeting will be reflected in the 7.COM decisions. After the working group meeting, the information session on the seventh Intergovernmental Committee was held to help State Parties understand the agenda and process of the Committee meeting.

Milee Choi (ICHCAP)

New Publication of UNESCO’s ICH Lists (2010-2011)
UNESCO has published three books on the UNESCO ICH Lists and Best Practices Register (2010-2011): the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. These publications contain descriptions as well as the selection criteria of the elements that were inscribed on the Lists in 2010 and 2011.

These publications, which are currently being distributed internationally, are expected to contribute towards raising awareness and visibility of intangible cultural heritage. Electric versions of these books are available for download in English and French on the UNESCO website: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00492

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ICH News Briefs

[UNESCO] 7th Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of ICH

The Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage took place at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris from 3 to 7 December 2012. The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is composed of 24 members among the 148 States Parties to the Convention.

During the session, the Committee inscribed four elements to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and twenty-seven elements to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Two projects for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices and four Requests for International Assistance were also approved.

During the session, the Consultative Body and the Subsidiary Body for the 2013 cycle were established as was a rotation system for seats on the Consultative Body for all cycles until 2019. In addition, ten non-governmental organisations were approved for accreditation. The Committee also examined sixteen periodic reports submitted by States Parties.

The next session of the Committee (8.COM) will take place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 2 to 8 December 2013.


The first international review meeting on UNESCO’s global strategy on strengthening national capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage was convened from 7 to 10 November 2012 in Beijing, China. It was organised by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at UNESCO in partnership with the Training Center for the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the Auspices of UNESCO (ICRiHAP) and the generous support from the government of China.

One year into the global strategy, forty-two countries are implementing tailored two-year capacity-building projects, and seventy-six training workshops have been held so far. The workshops were delivered by facilitators from the network of seventy-five UNESCO certified experts from all regions. They were trained to use the workshop materials developed by UNESCO in four thematic areas: (i) ratification, (ii) implementation, (iii) community-based inventorying, and (iv) nominations.

The meeting took stock of the experiences gained so far and assessed both the operational and substantive aspects of capacity-building activities. It reviewed the process from project and workshop preparation to their impact on advancing the implementation of the 2003 Convention in beneficiary countries. The group consolidated the lessons learnt and shared ideas on how to further improve the content and effectiveness of this global strategy.

This meeting was an excellent opportunity to pursue UNESCO’s objectives in the field of culture, notably to mobilise international and national expertise for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Following this first review meeting of the global capacity-building strategy, two additional review meetings are foreseen next year in Africa and Latin America.

[ROK] 2012 ICCN World Intangible Cultural Festival

The Inter-City Intangible Cultural Cooperation Network (ICCN), a UNESCO-accredited NGO, held the ICCN World Intangible Cultural Festival from 19 to 28 October 2012 in Gangneung, Korea. The international festival was organised under the theme of ‘Find the Value of Intangible Culture in a City’. Throughout the event, sixteen ICH performance teams from thirteen countries presented information on their national ICH elements inscribed on the UNESCO ICH Lists. The festival also offered performing classes, so visitors had the opportunity to learn various dances, songs, and more. Additionally, the secretariat of the 2012 ICCN Festival prepared various performances, exhibitions, international exchanges, and other events.

The festival was organised by the ICCN, which is made up of twenty-nine members from regional governments all over the world. For this year’s event, thirty cities from twenty-five countries, including member cities of ICCN, participated in the festival.

[Philippines] National Living Treasures Award for 2012

On November 8, 2012, President Benigno S. Aquino, III awarded the National Living Treasures Award to two traditional artists: Magdalena Gamayo, an inabel weaver, and Teofilo Garcia, a gourd casque maker. Both artists hail from the Northern provinces—Magdalena is a native of Ilocos Norte while Teofilo Garcia comes from Abra.

The National Living Treasures Award (Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan) is the highest honour given to traditional artists by the Philippine government. To become a Manlilikha ng Bayan, the candidate must satisfy five criteria: (a) technical and creative skill, (b) artistic quality, (c) community tradition, (d) artistic tradition, and (e) character and integrity.

Thus, the candidate must be a master of the tools and materials needed for the art, must have an established reputation as a master in the art, and must make artwork of extraordinary technical quality. In addition, the work of the candidate must be outstanding aesthetically, and the candidate must have consistently produced superior work over a significant period.

Teaching is an important component of the award, as the candidate must have
transferred and/or be willing to transfer the folk art skills to other members of the community.

The folk art tradition for which the candidate is being celebrated and must have been in existence for at least fifty years and must have been documented.

The National Living Treasures Award was established in 1993 by the Republic Act No. 7355. It is managed by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) through the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan Committee.

Since 1993, eleven artists have been awarded for their achievements in traditional music and dance, traditional poetry, mat and textile weaving, oral narratives, and metal craft.

[Samoa] Public Consultations on the UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding ICH

Tasked with a mission to protect and uphold Samoan intangible heritage, the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC), in partnership with UNESCO, hosted the second round of public consultations on the UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding ICH, in Savaii and Upolu.

Efforts by several nations and later by UNESCO have been aimed at sustaining and promoting the practice and skills of traditional cultures. Samoa now follows suit as the need to keep up with the ever-advancing civilisation also presses for every cultural community to embrace their identities, which are naturally embedded in all their cultural traditions and spaces. These public consultations were steps in the process of enabling Samoa to ratify the ICH Convention.

While the MESC is the key agency for culture in Samoa, other government agencies, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), Samoa Tourism Authority (STA), and the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development (MWCSD), as well as some NGOs have also been tasked to safeguard Samoan ICH.

The participants, representing the people of Samoa’s united voice, confirmed the need to ratify the UNESCO ICH Convention. It is now up to the MESC to move forward to overcome the challenge of achieving such a vital mission for Samoa.

[Source: UNESCO Apia]

[Timor-Leste] Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Timor-Leste

A three-day workshop on community-based inventories, as they relate the UNESCO 2003 Convention, was held from 23 to 25 October 2012 in the Suai sub-district of Cova Lima, Timor-Leste. The workshop was jointly organised by the Art and Culture of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (ACMTC), the Cova Lima District government, and UNESCO with support from the Japanese government through the UNESCO Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

This workshop gathered some fifty participants, including national and district culture officials and government officials as well as Suai sub-district community leaders, teachers, young traditional female dancers, local traditional musicians, and other community members. The twelve sessions of the workshop were intended to help equip participants with the basic knowledge and skills to design and facilitate a community-based inventorying process tailored to the current circumstances of Timor-Leste.

[Source: UNESCO]

[UNESCO-Accredited NGOs] NGO Forum Prior to 7.COM

NGOs accredited to act in an advisory capacity to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held their forum on 2 December 2012 in Paris, just before the Seventh Session of the Intergovernmental Committee (7.COM), which took place from 3 to 7 December 2012. Included in the forum was a symposium on community participation, which analysed how communities have participated in the activities around the 2003 Convention, such as the nomination processes as well as capacity-building programmes, inventorying, and other safeguarding activities at the national level. The afternoon was dedicated to a meeting that focused on the main issues concerning the roles of NGOs during the forthcoming 7.COM session and on the preparation of NGO interventions during the session. To date, there are 156 NGOs accredited to provide advisory services to the Committee.

[Source: UNESCO]

[ROK] International Symposium on ICH-Related NGOs

The Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation (CHF) organised the 2012 International Symposium for UNESCO-Accredited NGOs of ICH, which was held in Seoul, Korea, on 25 October 2012. For the symposium, accredited NGOs and experts from nine countries, including Mexico, India, Bulgaria, Mongolia, and South Africa, visited Seoul.

During the session, participants discussed way to develop both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, placing particular emphasis on the importance of community involvement in cultural heritage development.

The symposium was designed to provide accredited NGOs with a venue to examine the roles of NGOs in promoting cultural heritage through integrated approaches. The participating NGOs shared their experiences in ICH promotional activities.

After the symposium, the participants were given the opportunity to experience Korean traditional culture and cuisine by visiting Gyeongbokgung Royal Palace and Korea House, respectively.

The UNESCO-Accredited NGOs of the ICH International Symposium © CHF

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